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expense. It is better to have a few strong hives, than to have a considerable number, which it is necessary to feed from time to time.

Various methods have been suggested by ingenious men for feeding bees. Some recommend to put honey diluted with water, into an empty comb, split reeds, or clean wool; and Wildman describes a particular kind of vessel which he invented for the purpose. Perhaps the very best plan which can be adopted is to feed bees with honey-comb, especially if that be true which is stated by the authors of the "*Maison Rustique*," that pure honey does not form a food sufficiently substantial for them and consequently subjects them to disorders. They advise therefore to feed bees with honey-comb, taken from another hive, the cells of which are filled with crude wax or bee-bread.

If honey-comb cannot be procured, raise the hive from the board on which it is placed, and set underneath it a small plate of liquid honey, covered with paper pierced full of holes, through this the bees will suck the honey without daubing themselves. In a few days the plate may be removed, and an additional supply afforded, if necessary. In case honey cannot be procured, dissolve fine sugar in water so as to make it of the consistence of liquid honey, and present it to the bees in the manner above described, or fill with it the cells of an empty honey-comb, and place it under the hive. Some prefer dissolving the sugar in milk, supposing that they thus obtain a substance more resembling honey. The use of milk can certainly do no harm, though I do not imagine that by this process any particular advantage is gained, with respect to the bees; I confess however that I have not made experiments sufficient to determine this point. Let those who have occasion to feed several hives, try different substances. It is certainly an object to such to ascertain what is most proper for the sustenance of their bees.

I may conclude these remarks by observing that it is advisable to be rather generous than otherwise in feeding weak hives. By affording them an abundant supply, they will be more forward in spring. Bees are faithful

stewards, and will amply repay their master for the plentiful provision he may make for their support. They will be stronger in spring, will most probably swarm earlier in summer, and produce more and larger swarms than hives which have been provided with a scanty store. A. Z.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

LAWRENCE STERNE has found a defender in your last month's Magazine. I cannot agree in the opinion, that the death of an author should excuse him from just criticism. If his works survive and continue to have an injurious tendency on the public taste, no false delicacy should exempt them from merited censure. When I sent the *Anecdotes of Sterne*, I professed to have little acquaintance with his writings; I once made an attempt to read his *Tristram Shandy*, but found the first chapter so gross in its manner, that I closed the book with disgust. I like wit, but detest obscenity. I read his *Sentimental Journey* many years ago; and in it also I met with much to displease. His pruriency of manner was more glossed over, but on that account not less dangerous, for with an affectation of being refined, the delineation of some of his scenes is calculated to give other ideas than directly meet the ear; as in his account of the *Fille de Chambre*.

I give the following quotation from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

"In every serious page, and in many of much levity, the author writes in praise of benevolence, and declares that no one who knew him could suppose him one of those wretches who heap misfortune upon misfortune. But we have heard anecdotes of him extremely well authenticated, which prove that it was easier for him to praise this virtue than to practice it. His wit is universally allowed; but many readers have persuaded themselves that they found wit in his blank pages, while it is probable that he intended nothing but to amuse himself with the idea of the sage conjectures to which these pages would give occasion. Even his originality is not such as is generally supposed by those fond

admirers of the Shandean manner, who have presumed to compare him with Swift, Arbuthnot and Butler. He has borrowed both matter and manner from various authors, as every reader may be convinced by the learned, elegant and candid comments on his works, published by Dr. Ferriar, in the fourth volume of the *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society at Manchester.* *Encyclopædia Britan.* Article, *Sterne.*

To those who are curious to detect the plagiarisms of Sterne, Dr. Ferriar's Essay above alluded to, will present many specimens of his attempts to deck his writings with borrowed plumes. Dr. Ferriar has traced Sterne's obligation to Rabelais, Dr. Ferrand, Marivaux, Crébillon, Dr. Donne, Dr. Fludd, and especially to Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*; from the latter he appears to have borrowed so implicitly as in many instances to ridicule the follies of Burton's age, though they were not characteristic of the popular errors of the age in which Sterne lived; Dr. Ferriar remarks that "Sterne laughs at many exploded opinions and abandoned fooleries, and contrives to degrade some of his most solemn passages, by a *vicious levity.*" He further adds, "I have often wondered at the pains bestowed by Sterne, in ridiculing opinions not fashionable in his day, and have thought it singular, that he should produce the portrait of his Sophist, Mr. Shandy, with all the stains and mouldiness of the last century about him. For the love of scarce and whimsical books, was no vice of the time when *Tristram Shandy* appeared. But I am now convinced that all the singularities of that character were drawn from the perusal of *Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy*; not without reference, however, to the peculiarities of Burton's life, who is alleged to have fallen a victim to his astrological studies. We are told, accordingly, that Mr. Shandy had faith in astrology."

Charges of plagiarisms in his sermons are also substantiated against Sterne, by Dr. Ferriar, who demonstrates that he borrowed not only the general cast of sentiment, but even the very words from Bishop Hall in a variety of instances.

In a frivolous age, Sterne will doubtless have many admirers and advocates. Yet it is pleasing to observe that the number of his imitators is daily diminishing. A chaster, more delicate, and refined style of writing has made its way; and for this improvement I think we are indebted to many highly interesting and elegant female writers of the present day. They in a very considerable degree have contributed to refine our taste, and to banish that *grossness* of expression which defaced the pages of some of the most eminent writers in the beginning and middle of the 18th century. The Barbaulds, the Edgeworths, the Hamiltons, the Burneys, the Hays, the Wakefields, and other female writers have produced this highly pleasing improvement. To the debts we already owed to women, for most of what is truly pleasing and amiable in private life, these writers have laid us under additional obligations by refining our literary taste, and inducing, by the force of their examples, the writers of the other sex to adopt a greater delicacy of style. I congratulate my contemporaries on this improvement. The youth of both sexes need not now fear to meet, in general, in modern works of approved reputation with passages like those, which frequently occur in the pages of Sterne, calculated to

"Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,
Or from the soft ey'd virgin steal a tear;"

and where we are afraid of meeting in every line with something to shock the feelings of delicacy and modesty, and rendering the task of reading aloud in a mixed company, a precarious office. I regret to add that from this praise, I am compelled to exempt some passages in the writings of the *unequal* Burns, who may be characterized in the language in which the eccentric Dermody describes himself;

"Now Earth-enamoured, grov'ling with
the worm,
Now seraph-plum'd, the wonderful, the
wild."

The writings of Thomas Moore deserve still severer censure, and some of his female imitators have further disgraced themselves and their sex by their amatory effusions.

A READER.